Manipur The Government of Manipur have completed the identification of Antyodaya beneficiaries. Confirmation on distribution of distinctive ration cards to the beneficiaries is awaited for allocation of foodgrains under the scheme.

Tamil Nadu—The State Government initially did not start the work of implementation of AAY as State Government had requested that the benefits under the scheme should cover old age persons and destitute pension scheme beneficiaries. The State Government was, however, asked to launch the scheme so as to address the food security concerns of the most vulnerable sections of the society who are living in families. Confirmation regarding the task of issue of distinctive ration cards is awaited from the State Government for allocation of foodgrains under the scheme.

Lakshadweep—The Administration has completed the task of identification and issued distinctive ration cards to 400 Antyodaya families. Allocation of foodgrains under AAY is in process.

Export target for Wheat and Rice

2636. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the export target for wheat and rice has not been achieved and is not likely to be achieved by the year end;

(b) if so, the target and the achievement till date;

(c) the reasons for sluggish demand from other countries; and

(d) the steps taken to remedy the situation and boost exports of rice and wheat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) For 2001-2002, 50 lakh MTs of wheat and 30 lakhs MTs rice respectively have been earmarked for export from the Central Pool. Against this 18.50 lakh MTs of wheat and 2.51 lakh MTs of rice have been shipped upto 31-10-2001. Food Corporation of India has allotted so far quantity of 41.51 lakh MTs of wheat and 11.73 lakh MTs of rice for export.

(c) and (d) Demands vary of account of international market forces, variation in productions, food shortages etc. However, the Government has taken the following steps to increase export of wheat and rice from the Central Pool:—

(i) Offer wheat and rice from the Central Pool for export and maintain the export price of wheat and rice at internationally competitive levels,

(ii) To constantly monitor exports of wheat and rice and sort out the problems on this front,

(iii) Setting up cleaning facilities at the Kandla Port for ensuring that acceptable quality of foodgrains are sent for export, and

(iv) Creation of an Export Cell in the Department of Food & Public Distribution to deal with export of foodgrains in a focused manner.

Procurement of Kharif Crops

2637. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU) : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the likely quantity of Kharif crops to be procured; and

(b) whether Government are thinking of increasing the procurement price of Kharif crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) As the procurement operations are voluntary in nature and the farmers have the choice to sell their produce to the State Government, Food Corporation of India, or in the open markets, as is advantageous to them, no target is fixed for procurement of Kharif crops. However, in a meeting taken by this Ministry with Food Secretaries of rice producing States on 16-8-2001, it was estimated that a quantity of 195 lakh tonnes of rice would likely be procured during Kharif Marketing Season 2001-2002.

(b) At present, there is no proposal to increase the Minimum Support Prices already fixed for the 2001-2002 Kharif crop.